Keep

Wayland, Sep. 10th 1861

Dear Mrs. May,

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It is with great diffi-
-dence that I make any suggestion about the Reception we propose to give to Anti-
-Slavery friends, because I have never had anything to do with the financial affairs of the Society, and so have never exercised my thoughts in that direction. But, having made that de-
-duction from the value of my suggestions, I will tell you some thoughts that have come into my head.

I think we must place our calculations upon a much smaller company than we have formerly had, on account of the hard times, the absorption of public interest in other more exciting things, and the fact that some of our friends think we had better not have any meeting. For these reasons, why not make it a kind of private party,

instead of calling it a public festival, or reception? We might modestly, and with perfect truth, say that the state of public affairs induced us not to proceed on so large a scale as formerly; but that we felt it would be pleasant and strengthening to take each other by the hand, and talk over together the aspect of the cause; that, at present, it was by no means certain that our work would be done for us by politi-cians, or rather by the pressure of events compelling politicians; that the moral influ-ence, which it was our peculiar mission to strengthen, might be more needed than it ever had been. and that until that time, when the matter was certainly decided as we hoped, it was important that the Anti-Slavery offices should be kept open, and papers sustained, and Tracts distributed. That for these reasons, we earnestly invited friends to meet, and consult, and encourage each other, and to bring such pecuniary offerings as they could spare. I have a great horror of that large, cold Music Hall.

Could we not hire a room in some respectable and not over-expensive hotel? That is often done for balls; why would it not answer <u>our</u> purpose? We might ask our friends to send us bread and butter spread, sandwiches, plain simple cakes, &c; and those who wanted tea or coffee, could procure it in the hotel, and pay for it themselves. As we do not take pay for what people eat, we gain nothing <u>pecuniarly</u> by what is sent in to us. Now that coffee and tea are <u>taxed</u>, we shall not be likely to have much sent to us, and if we did, it would not increase our funds, and it would save us a world of trouble and slopping to have those articles furnished by the hotel, and then people would have it hot and in good order, and not have cause to complain, as they have done.

Some one good singer, a professional one, might be hired to sing "John Brown," Hallelujah," "Down in Dixie's Land," "Star-spangled Banner", and other things

that people have a curiosity to hear at this time. The meeting might be warmed up in this way, then go to talking in groups; then at 10 o'clock Mr. Garrison, with a few singing friends, who had practised together previously, might sing some serious and solemn Anti Slavery Hymn, before we parted.

Even if we get but little money, I think such a meeting would do good.

All of which I submit to your better judgment.

Yours with cordial affection,

L. Maria Child.

P. S. Perhaps you had better keep this letter to read at our next meeting. It may, at least, suggest thoughts to others.